In nearly all cases I have found this snail feeding on Jack-fruit (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) which had been putrified to a pulp, but on two or three occasions I found it greedily devouring a fungus like growth which occurs frequently on rotten logs but the name of which I am ignorant of.

A. P. KINLOCH, F.Z.S.

Nelliampathy Hills,
8th September 1921.

No. XXV.—BUTTERFLY FEEDING ON EXCRETA.

With reference to a recent note in the Journal of a butterfly drinking its own excreta, I send you herewith for identification a small butterfly which is at present common in my verandah at Dharmsala (4,000 feet). This morning I watched one of them which had settled on the floor of the verandah ; it kept on bending its abdomen forward and depositing a drop of moisture which it then leaning backwards drank up with its proboscis. This was repeated several times.

HUGH WHISTLER. F.Z.S., C.F.A.O.U.

Dharmsala, Punjab,
12*th August* 1921.

[The Butterfly sent to the Society by Mr. Whistler has been identified as *Hasora alexis* Fab. (Eds.)]

No. XXVI.—THE BLACK ROCK SCORPION (*PALAMNŒUS SWAMMERDAMI*).

On 22nd July 1921, about 7 a.m., my pankah boy informed me that he had seen an animal go into some water standing in a brick drain into which my bath emptied. He told me that it was a scorpion and I did not believe him, never having heard of a scorpion voluntarily entering water. However, he stuck to it and I went to see. After taking out some broken brick the tail of a scorpion appeared and he was duly captured unharmed. I decided to see if he could really stand water for any time and put him into an enamelled jug three parts full. He, or rather she, displayed no anxiety and assumed the usual sparring attitude but presently relaxed and stayed quiet. Presently I scraped my foot slightly on the concrete floor and she immediately sprang to the defensive attitude. No part of me was touching the table or jug and the sound must have reached her through table and water. She responded to about 3 scrapes and then gave it up.

After sitting quiet for about a quarter of an hour from the time of immersion she set to work quietly to explore her prison and to try and get out. She tried walking up the sides but they were too steep and smooth. Then with tail braced across the jug she worked up the opposite side with front legs and chelæ until the jug by reason of its bulge became too wide for her to span. In doing this, when at greatest stretch, she bore against the side of the jug with the point of her sting so as to get the advantage of the length of vesicle. After several attempts this was given up and she tried bracing herself round the inside curve of the jug and working up sideways. At this she succeeded so well as to get the tarsus joints of top side out of water, but the overhang of the side defeated her and she slipped back. She tried this 3 times and then resigned herself to fate and sat quietly at the bottom. I had to go to office

and left her in the jug. On my return I found her still quiet but resentful of any interference. At six and half of hours from time of immersion I took her out, she was a bit languid at first but resented interference. Ten minutes later she was very fierce and active and remained so until this morning, 48 hours after having been put into the water, I chloroformed her. Research gave me the following particulars: All measurements taken as in Fauna of British India, Arachnidæ, by Pocock. Length in all 136 mm. Carapace 18, tail 82, brachinus 12, width of hand 17, length of moveable finger 19, length of hand posterior lobe to tip of fixed ginger 30. (Pocock does not say how he measured the "under hand.") Sex female, *Palamnœus swammerdami*. Agrees with the description in Fauna of British India except that colour is a good bolster green all over legs and vesicle reddish, qunitæ operculum, pecter sternum yellow (except last segment dark brown to green), pentagonæ, cephalothoracii sternum reddish, tail blackish or almost black green.

A. G. FRERE,
Major, I. A.

St. Thomas' Mount, Madras,
24*th September* 1921.

No. XXVII.—SCORPION COMMITTING SUICIDE.

The following occurrence may be of some interest. It is generally supposed that scorpions if surrounded by fire or if suddenly approached by a bright light will sting themselves to death rather than suffer the agonies of burning. Romanes amongst others in "Animal Intelligence" refers to it as an unique instance of suicide amongst animals. I have frequently tried the experiment and have never succeeded in getting a scorpion to sting itself. In every instance they preferred to be burned and even walked out over the circle of fire. Others who have tried similar experiments have to my knowledge also failed to induce suicide. The story regarding suicide has therefore been largely discredited. The following occurrence would seem to prove however that on occasions scorpions undoubtedly do commit suicide. The other day my wife in moving some papers disturbed a scorpion. Not wishing to kill it and not being certain what it was she confined it in an inverted peg tumbler. I returned within the hour and on removing the tumbler to kill the scorpion found it quite dead. Moreover, the body was swollen to an inordinate size almost to bursting point being quite different in appearance when first confined. When last seen it had been attempting to crawl up the inside of the glass and invariably slipped back, but not in such a way as to make it at all probable that it could have accidentally stung itself. The manner and period of confinement were not such as to make it conceivable that an animal like a scorpion could have died of want of air. Moreover this would not account for the swollen condition of the body. The fluid which had distended the body was of a blackish grey colour giving one the impression that some chemical change in the natural fluid of the body had taken place. Taking all the circumstances into consideration the only possible conclusion seems to be that the scorpion died from poison which was self-inflicted.

A. A. DUNBAR BRANDER, I.F.S.

Naini Tal,
30*th September* 1921.